LOCAL LADY TO COMPETE IN EUROPEANS

By Liam Timmins

Caltra's Aoife Mulry recently qualified to represent Ireland at the 2024 European Triathlon Championships in Vichy, France and has her eyes set on further championships later in the year.

Aoife started doing triathlons, a multisport contest consisting of running, swimming and biking, about two years ago with her first ever race at Ballinasloe Coral Leisure. She since started training with the Athlone Triathlon Club and has recently completed her Tri-Leader training to coach fellow members.

The local triathlete had a sporty upbringing, playing alongside her sister Ailbhe at Caltra-Cuans over recent years. Regardless Aoife is insistent triathlons are her forté, mentioning the health benefits that come with this intense endurance sport. She elaborates: "There are many benefits of triathlon including a healthy regime of exercise and sense of community in our club and at races. We all understand how hard this sport is after all it is three sports compiled into one event! The support I've gotten from my clubmates is incredible, I have made friends for life in the club."

Qualifying for the European Championships has been a significant milestone for Aoife, being her first opportunity to represent Ireland at an international level. She has since started training ten to twelve hours a week in preparation including three swims, two runs and two-three bike sessions.

Aoife is also a PhD student studying Microbiology at TUS Athlone, fitting her regime around her full-time research hours. Alongside Team Ireland, she will be joined by 5 to 6 athletes at the Vichy contest competing in a 1.5km swim, 40km bike and 10km run. Her mother, aunt and sister intend on following her to the races, showing their support while also enjoying a sunny holiday for themselves!

Aoife has already started this year strong with her first ever podium finish during the Triathlon Ireland Duathlon National Series in Naas. Prior to the European Championships in September, she will also complete a Half Ironman of 113km and will continue competing in the National Series. She also hopes to race in the World Triathlon Championship Finals this October in Malaga.

While she enjoys competing in the sport, Aoife is aware of the financial challenges that come with it. Generally the triathlon is an expensive sport to participate in, and travel costs will only increase spending. She will be receiving some financial support from her club in Athlone for this event but is seeking sponsorship opportunities from any local businesses.

Anyone looking to assist can contact Aoife at aoifemulry@gmail.com.

Aoife competing in the bike segment of the Naas Duathlon, decorated in Athlone Triathlon Club colours.

Aoife starting with the run during the Duathlon National Championships in Phoenix Park.

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